

STRATEGIC INTELLIGENCE BRIEF

SECURITY THREATS TO CANADA'S 44th ELECTIONS – UPDATE #5

This assessment is intended to provide situational awareness of domestic security-related threats to Canada's 44th general elections. The information in this assessment is based on reporting from the RCMP Combined Intelligence Group, law enforcement partners, searches against RCMP holdings, and open source resources (Information current as of September 15, 2021, 1100hrs). The IMCIT continues to maintain visibility on emerging threats and will provide updates as required basis.

KEY POINTS

- Threats directed towards Protected Persons continue, which the Prime Minister (PM) remaining the primary target.
- Anti-Liberal Party incidents of assault and vandalism have been reported.

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- Social media chatter related to protests at Liberal campaign stops has recently been overshadowed by the promotion of the "World Wide Rally For Freedom" event taking place on 18 September, 2021. It is likely that ideologically motivated individuals who have attended Liberal campaign events will be in attendance at these rallies.

PURPOSE

To provide an overview of the current domestic threat environment related to Canada's 44th general elections, as of 15 September, 2021.

THREATS TO PROTECTED PERSONS

Threats to Protected Persons continue. In the last 24 hours, a number of incidents have occurred:

- An Liberal Party of Canada (LPC) candidate from Northern Ontario was assaulted in his campaign office when a female subject entered the office, yelled and pushed a table against him.¹ The subject was charged with assault with a weapon.²

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Federal Policing National Intelligence – Ideologically Motivated Criminal Intelligence Team (IMCIT)

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- The home of the Mayor of St. Catharines, ON was vandalized with graffiti containing expletives directed towards various people and groups (i.e.: against Trudeau, against communists, etc.).³ According to news reports, the Mayor has not campaigned in support of any particular political party.⁴
- 4chan continues to serve as a prominent hub for threats targeting Protected Persons. Three new RCMP investigative files⁵ have been opened within the last 24 hours relating to threats directed against the PM and other government officials such as the Chief Public Health Officer of Canada. As examples, one post offered to assassinate the PM if the weapons ban occurs; a second post encouraged readers to kill elected officials who mandate vaccines and vaccine passports.

The RCMP continues to track and assess all such threats and engages with applicable security and law enforcement partners as required.

THREATS TO THE POLLING STATIONS

During the advance polling (between 10-13 September, 2021)

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Based on this information, it is likely that polling stations throughout Canada will experience disruptions of this nature on election day. That IMCIT assess that, at the time of this writing, there are no indications which suggests individuals are advocating for violence on election day.

PUBLIC ORDER EVENTS

Social media chatter^a related to protests at Liberal campaign stops has been overshadowed in the past few days by the promotion of the “World Wide Rally For Freedom” event taking place internationally on 18 September, 2021⁶, including in multiple Canadian cities.⁷ The public order event aims to promote anti-lockdown/anti-mask/anti-vaccine narratives. The IMCIT assesses that this is likely due to the geographic location of recent LPC campaign events which have been held outside of Ontario, as well as the anti-vaccine mandate protests outside hospitals on September 13.

A counter-protest to the “World Wide Rally For Freedom” event has been identified in Toronto⁸; it is possible additional public order events will be planned to counter Rally protests in other Canadian cities. This is the fourth “World Wide Rally For Freedom” that has occurred in Canada over the past several months and attendance typically includes individuals who have been involved with protesting COVID-19 public health restrictions weekly since April 2020. The presence of counter-protests increases the possibility of violence at these events.

Based on the current social media networks sharing information about the Rally, conspiratorial signage at recent events and the presence of ideologically-linked individuals at past anti-Liberal and anti-vaccine protests, it is anticipated that ideologically-motivated individuals will be present at these protests.

^a Social media platforms include Facebook, s.37 Twitter, Instagram, Gab, etc.

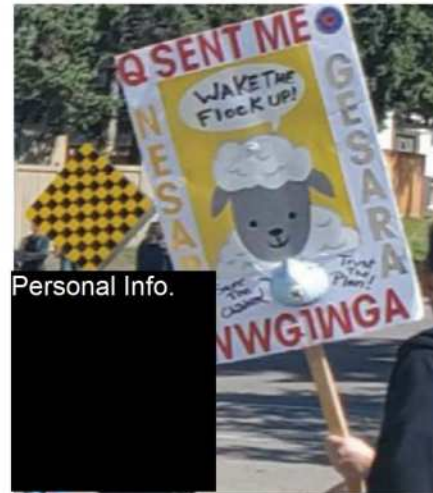
SOCIAL MEDIA - THE PAST 24HRS

Open source information gathered in the last twenty four hours suggests that there was QAnon signage present at a hospital protest in Calgary, AB that took place on 13 September, 2021.⁹ The screen capture below was taken from a Twitter account that reported on the protest.

At the same protest in Calgary, video of verbal altercations between anti-vaccine protesters and counter-protesters apparently dressed in “black bloc”^b attire is also circulating online.¹⁰

A news article from 14 September, 2021 reported that “far-right and white nationalist groups” are urging supporters to vote for the People’s Party of Canada (PPC).¹¹ The IMCIT has observed an official PPC account which has reposted content that is consistent with rhetoric used in QAnon conspiracy theories.¹²

The screen capture below shows a retweet from the verified^c PPC HQ - People’s Party of Canada which includes a reference by the original poster which reads, “The storm is here”, which is a QAnon reference for the day of reckoning during which leaders who are perceived by Q believers to be associated with the “deep state” will be persecuted.



The IMCIT acknowledges that conspiratorial content is often posted and reposted by a variety of accounts without contextual knowledge linking it to specific movements, groups or notable events. However, it is important to note that reposted content can be considered as an endorsement of ideas that are conspiratorial in nature and can lend unwarranted legitimacy to fuel conspiracy narratives after the election period concludes regardless of the outcome.

The RCMP continues to track and assess public order and public safety threats and engages with applicable security and law enforcement partners as required.

^b “Black bloc” is a tactic where protesters dress in all black to appear unified, conceal their identity from opposing protesters, protect against pepper spray and evade law enforcement detection. In Canada, black bloc has been seen at past protests involving self-described anarchists.

^c The blue Verified badge on Twitter lets people know that an account of public interest is authentic. To receive the blue badge, your account must be authentic, notable, and active. <https://help.twitter.com/en/managing-your-account/about-twitter-verified-accounts#:~:text=The%20blue%20Verified%20badge%20on,authentic%2C%20notable%2C%20and%20active>.

Distribution List

RCMP, s.37 [REDACTED] Panel of Five

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Approved by: Director, Directorate of Strategic Intelligence, Federal Policing National Intelligence

¹ <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/sudbury/serre-assaulted-campaign-office-1.6175489>

² Ibid.

³ <https://www.stcatharinesstandard.ca/news/crime/2021/09/14/st-catharines-mayors-house-vehicles-targeted-by-vandalism.html>

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ RCMP Holdings

⁶ <https://worldwidedemonstration.com>

⁷ <https://www.canadaforfreedom.info>

⁸ <https://twitter.com/RandalOulton/status/1437849457861791755>

⁹ <https://twitter.com/YYCantiracist/status/1437902913372712960/photo/1>

¹⁰ Personal Info. [REDACTED]

¹¹ <https://www.thestar.com/politics/federal-election/2021/09/14/far-right-and-white-nationalist-groups-urge-followers-to-support-maxime-berniers-peoples-party-of-canada.html>

Personal Info. [REDACTED]